

Songs of Forest and Stream

BY

Rev. C. T. EASTON, M.A.



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A TROUT STREAM.

O'er hidden rocks its waters glide,
All pent within a dark ravine;
Then bursting forth it reaches wide,
And flows a glorious stream.

Through spreading avenues of trees,
That hide from view the meadows nigh
Its vista opens out to please,
A sight to charm the eye.

Next, all its forces it recalls,
And rushing wildly in its flow,
It leaps a precipice and falls
In spouting foam below.

It then meanders for a while,
And wimpling 'neath the willow's shade,
It wears a most entrancing smile
In vernal pomp arrayed.

It gurgles and it purls and sings,
In cadence, musical and low,
In eddying swirls, again it swings
Beneath a bridge to flow.

It sparkles where its golden sands
A shallow form that you may wade;
Where flicker broad and shadowy bands,
Of dancing light and shade.

Its calm, secluded pools that lie
Within the shadows of a wood,
Are deep and tranquil where the shy
Trout sport in playful mood.

The angler loves this limpid stream,
In all its phases—when the year
Bursts forth in glory, and the gleam
Of spring doth reappear.

LINES ON A MAY FLOWER.

Far in the wilderness 'midst the soft mosses
A flower there blooms rare in its purity—
Down in the valleys, where the brisk squirrels
Frolic the day long 'neath the green tree.

Down by the gurgling water's lullaby,
Musical waters which murmuring flow,
There may be found this delicate flower—
This pink and white floweret purer than snow.

It blooms where the willow-wren warbling softly
Presses its blossoms sweet to the wild bees,
All in a hollow tree making their honey,
Whilst their murmurings haunt the burgeoning
trees.

THE FISHERMAN'S DREAM.

'Twas an ideal day for a fisherman's sport,
But the salmon seemed of a surly sort,
To the fly to rise, refusing—
He patiently whipped each pool in turn,
But the salmon continued his efforts to spurn
Which to him was not amusing.

At length he tried a familiar pool
Filled from above by a cascade, full
Of crystal lymph, most limpid,
When lo! from its depths a fish arose
With a hooked, peculiar and lengthy nose,
Whilst his scales in sunshine glinted.

Then our fisherman cast his choicest fly
But this salmon gave it the quick go-by,
Refusing the tinsel deception,
The fly he would not take, but he grew
Enormous in size, in the fisherman's view
Beyond all previous conception.

Fancies in dream take shape in the brain,
And metamorphosis speeds amain
In kaleidoscopic changes,
And scenes on scenes will pass in review
Ever beginning and changing anew—
Embracing opposite ranges.

So hap't it now, as our fisherman dream'd,
For the salmon changed in form and seem'd
 To become to his eyes a fairy,
That wading ashore was seen to smile
At our fisherman's queer and equivocal style
 Of fishing for creatures so merry.

And taking the rod from him amaz'd
She deftly adjusted a fly, whilst he gaz'd
 In great astonishment very,
She cast the fly on a silvery pool
Where the froth was white as purest wool,
 When lo! a salmon wary

Leaped at the fly with a sudden dash,
Swishing his tail with a mighty splash,
 But he was struck in a jiffy.
The salmon dived and rushed away
But this fairy knew him how to play,—
 So big a salmon and thrifty;

The line ran out to its length, but still
The captive salmon fled on with a will
 With the fairy following after,—
Over the rocks she leaped with speed
But our fisherman could not follow her lead
 As she left him with mocking laughter.

“Come on!” she cried and vanished in air
And that was the last he saw of the fair
 The salmon's flight pursuing,
But he left by the mazy stream,
Which ran up hill in his dizzy dream,
 His two-fold loss was ruing.

WATER LILIES.

(A Song for An Outing.)

Come my love and let us go
Boating where the lilies blow!
On the bosom of the stream
Floating in a lazy dream.

Come, and while away the hours
Cares beguiling 'midst the flowers
Of the lilies, smiling where
Zephyrs woo their blossoms fair.

Come my love, these frail treasures
A short day their beauty measures;
Soon they'll droop and die and wither
Where they gleam along the river.

Come my love, and we'll gather
Lilies white and gold together!
Where the clustering blossoms bloom
On the water's stagnant gloom.

A MORNING'S WALK.

One morn as I my walk would take
Along the margin of a lake
That trembled to the wind's alarm—
And as the sinuous pathway wound
Over steep and rugged ground,
Along the margin of the tarn
In its beauty isolate,—
I saw a waterfowl to lead
Her downy fledglings from the nest
Where she had warm'd them to her breast
To follow her at slowest speed,—
It was a sight much to suggest,
To see her wise solicitude,
So tender for her callow brood
Lest any danger should molest.

WINTER.

Congealed are the streams that murmured so softly,
When summer serene, spread her sweetness around,
Umbrageous no more are the forests that lofty
Clothed valleys and hills in an umbrage profound.

Neath the rigors of Boreas, tempestuous roaring,
And snows drifting past, obstructing the ways,
Robed in the "beautiful" wreathed by winds warring,
The landscape no more its glories displays.

O, come again swiftly, favonian breezes!
That blow from the west and brighten our lands,
Where winter so dreary, severely is reigning,
Then—the Earth in her beauty shall burst from her bands.

THE SANCTUARY.

In grandeur, wonderful array'd
This scene did nature fair adorn,
With all her magic change of form,
With subtle play of light and shade.

Upon the landscape grandly vast,
At times a tenebritic sky
Surcharged with thunder muttering nigh
A shadow on its smile would cast.

But when had vanished the eclipse
A new effulgence would be born,
More radiant after the wild storm;
Which passed with thunder on its lips.

Whilst towering up in strength sublime
In pinnacles the mountains rose;
Which glistened in eternal snows—
An inspiration for all time.

But one peak flung his haughty crest
Sublime, in his vast solitude—
In stern and frowning attitude
Far in the sky, beyond the rest

Of his compeers, all dwarfed in size
In measurement with him, that stood
Above them in his altitude,
And isolation's grandest rise.

The level balance of a cloud
Would settle sometimes 'thwart his breast
And brood thereon in quiet rest,
And interpose its misty shroud

Between his grandeur and the eye,
Whilst a lone star its light renew'd
Above his head, which vastly stood
Outlined against the vaulted sky.

A lake by verdant hills enclos'd,
A gem set in the midst of green,—
Like crystal flashing in the gleam,
Its beauty, to the eye disclos'd.

It was indeed a glorious view:—
A lake unruffled by a storm,
So still it was at early morn,
That hills and skies of sapphire hue

Repos'd, reflected in its deeps
Placid as glass by wind unbroke;
Nor lashed to fury by the stroke
Of sudden storm that downward leaps.

And eerie sounds would oft arise
At night, so solemn, still and lone,
When in the hills the gusts would moan,
And mingle with the weird cries,

Of wild fowl fleeing through the gloom;
Of swans—which make this haunt their
home,
Whose notes were like a trumpet tone,
And woke the challenge of the loon.

It was in truth a grand asile
Displaying pristine loveliness;
Where nature in her liveliest dress
Shone with creation's radiant smile.

LINES ON LAKE OKANAGAN, B. C.

Fair Okanagan! In beauty reposing
Can e'er a lake's bosom be clearer than thine—
Or prospect more pleasing for mortal to muse on,—
The mountains inclosing, thy wave crystalline?

Grand Okanagan! How placid thy face is;
When morning's calm splendor presides o'er the scene;
Ere the rippling zephyr of summer expands o'er
Thy mirror-like surface, with silvery sheen.

If Okanagan, the full moon resplendent
In all her enchantment, transfiguring shine—
'Tis then, Okanagan, with blissful contentment
Thy prospect we gaze on, and think thee sublime!

Oh, Okanagan, Peace is thy Guardian!
Frequenting with freedom thy picturesque shores,
Where denizens wild come, on swift rushing pinions,
When summer thy transient beauty restores.

Farewell Okanagan! Thy vista so smiling,
Is sweetly idyllic to friendship and love,
Disclosing a beauty which charms whilst beguiling
Our steps to the mountains, high crested above.

THE LAST OF THE BUFFALOES.

The last of the buffaloes are we,
That peopled the prairies wide,
In freedom we roam'd, rejoicing in strength,
And glorious in our pride.

Those limitless regions were our home,
Our herds were myriads strong,
We swept through measureless prairies and lone,
Irresistible thundering on.

From the Rockies which rise to meet the Blue
Like living billows swept we,
Peerless were we, in our freedom which knew
Nor restraint, nor boundary.

Nor prowling wolf nor bear feared we,
Nor the redman in his lair;
A few fell 'neath his arrows and spears,
As he hung on our flanks and rear.

We feared nought but the prairie-fires
That swept in billowy flame,
Through wastes fed by the tall dry grass
And the withered, reedy cane.

But we scented the smoke afar and fled
In a frenzy of mortal fear,
The murk rolled up like thunder clouds,
With crackling flames in rear.

The river we sought—some lake or marsh
Which cooled each lolling tongue,
We wallow'd in mire, when heat oppress'd
And the galling gadfly stung.

We cropp'd the tender, succulent grass
When Spring with vernal ray,
Bade Life again renew the Earth
And rob'd her in sweet array.

O, freedom was ours, where the plains
Seem'd interminable,
Here were our pastures, here was spread
Our Creator's table!

Alas, one day fear seized our hearts,
His shadow the white man cast
Athwart our grounds, for that had come
Which made our hearts beat fast,

The trader came with slaughter fell,
With lust for gain, and stolid—
He slaughtered our herds relentlessly:—
Annihilation followed.

A NIMROD.

He scorned your tame domestic sport—
The covey 'midst the brambles.
He sighed for game of other sort,
And not for easy rambles

O'er moors and through the tangled copse
Pursuing game receding,
By fens and streams where downward flops
The mallard to his feeding.

Instead thereof he sought the steep
Accessible recesses:—
Where agile goats sure-footed leap
The frowning precipices.

He track'd the moose that roved through dim,
Primeval forests boggy.
Or Wapiti with antlers slim
Pursued o'er mosses quaggy.

Great shaggy beasts, in their wild lair,
'Twas he first set his eyes on,
He hunted wolf and grizzly bear,
The caribou and bison.

But this was not sufficient ground
 'Twas India he relied on—
That hot, mysterious, jungle land,
 With elephants to ride on.

He bagged the stealthy tiger-cat,
 With blood-red fangs and horrid,
He stretch'd him in the jungle flat,
 A bullet through his forehead.

For greater conquests still he sighed,
 For Africa unknown,
Where lions roam the desert wide,
 To huge proportions grown.

Where mighty elephants and wild,
 Gigantic, fierce and cunning
And never by man's yoke defil'd
 Or matched 'mong beasts for running.

Where crocodiles by scores abound
 In pools along the rivers,
And the rhinoceros is found
 Enough to give you shivers.

The tusky elephants he slew,—
 Ferocious lions roaring
He traversed lands that no man knew,
 And carried all before him.

HUNTING THE MOOSE

Hunter! The moon's full splendor
 Rides in the zenith high,
Whilst myriad stars attend her
 Queen regent of the sky.

In glorious pride ascendent
 She queens it o'er the night,
With glory for attendant
 Diffuses she her light.

Upon the waves it dances,
 It falls upon the green,
And from the rocks it glances
 With soft illusive beam.

Hunter, the hoar-frost glistens
On grass, and fern and tree!—
The moose in covert listens,
Alert, and keen is he.

The air is crisp,— the morning
Will soon dawn in the sky—
Be cautious, else a warning
You'll send the stag that's nigh.

Hunter, wind your birchen call,
And wake the sleeping wood!
With a long and wailing cry
That stirs the solitude!

The quarry hears your challenge,
He lifts his antlered head,
He bellows a responsive call,
And leaves his mossy bed.

He takes his way with vigor,
He tops a neighboring rise—
A silhouetted figure
Against the morning skies..

Now rise to the occasion!
He's coming with a rush,
He needs no more persuasion—
A shot, a thud—a hush.

SUNT QUOS JUVAT.

Some it delights to travel o'er
The world, and foreign lands explore
With keen, observant eye;
To note the customs and the ways
Which to their view each land displays
In wide diversity.

Some it delights to hunt big game,
And thereby bid for Nimrod's fame
With trophies many a one.
The kingly lion whose loud roar
Re-echoes on Zambesi's shore,
Falls victim to their gun.

It pleases more to hunt the moose,
To traverse bogs, with stunted spruce,
 In forest wilds to camp,
To miss the monarch of the wastes,
And note with sorrow he escapes,
 And that their shot is blank.

Whilst others take a keen delight
To pink the mallard in his flight,
 And wing him on the fly;
Or in their spring or autumn flight
To ambush wary geese at night,
 Made raucous with their cry.

The courser, yacht, and kindred sports
May do for those who have their "fortes"
 In racing and aquatics;
In air-ships others take delight,
And make a grand aerial flight,
 Keen on aeronautics.

A greater pleasure 'tis to ply
The angler's rod and mimic fly,
 And beat his troutship wary,
By some meandering shady stream.
Where crystal pools, sequestered seem
 The haunt of water-fairy.

The speckled denizens that lie
Concealed from an observant eye,
 Delight in depths secluded;
To wonderful proportions grown
And shrouded 'neath a bank or stone,
 Some trout lies undeluded;

And wise in an experience firm
Resists all lures, the choicest worm
 For him has no enticement.
He fans the water with his fins,
The coolest depths he laz'ly wins,
 To vanish in a moment.

O, it delights when nature beams
Occasion'ly with mystic gleams
 To view her pristine glory;
And contemplate her scenes sublime,
And note the marvellous design
 In nature's wondrous story.

A SUMMER'S MORNING.

'Tis summer's morn and with his fire,
The sun hath set the heavens aglow,
And as he mounts his pathway higher,
Effulgent glories grow.

The clouds like golden argosies
Are wafted from a crimson shore,
And over opalescent seas
They sail the winds before.

The sun glints on the dewy beads
That sparkle on each blade of grass,
The ducks are feeding midst the reeds,
The lake is like a glass!

Pure is the morn, the sky serene!
To jar the peace there's not a stir,
Whilst many a soft and golden beam
Adorns the landscape fair.

Sweet is the morn with fragrances
Exhaled from many a blossoming rose,
From countless floral pageantries
That early summer shows.

The sun is rising o'er the wave
Blood-red he seems a Cyclops' eye,
With gorgeous alchemy and brave
Transfiguring the sky.

The fisherman's awake, for he
Rejoices in the morning's air,
So odorous with fragrancy
Of balsam, pine and fir.

I've met him in the early morn
Returning from frequented haunts,
For he is one his coach to scorn—
A man, no hardship daunts.

Enthusiast, no sluggard he,—
Not very learn'd but somewhat wise,—
And generous, and full of glee
He loves an early rise.

IN ARCADY.

A pebbly bed as white as snow
This river hath, and as they flow,
 The waters sparkle;
Whilst from its pools as crystal clear
A trout may rise at fly that's near
 With sudden startle.

Impatient 'gainst obstructing stone
It rages some and makes a foam,
 And dashes over,
To glide unruffl'd on its way
Serener than a summer's day
 'Midst banks of clover.

Here perchance by this glad stream
A fisherman may meet serene
 At morning's blush
Propitious Fortune in his sport,
Where from above the waters spurt
 And downward rush.

Here scenic beauty has its home:
And here perchance some nymph may come
 With eyes as deep
Aa are the pools that placid lie
And shaded darkly 'neath the sky
 As if asleep.

And here and there you meet a spring
Secluded, cool, with many a ring
 Of spouts and flurries,
Which rise and bubble in the sands
As if they were some dancing bands
 Of mimic fairies.

Its depths than crystal, clearer are.
And in the heat the birds draw near
 To dip their bill
Just where it overflows its brink,
And where each denizen may drink,
 Secure its fill.

Whilst to some rustic Chloe shy
This glassy fountain might supply
 A limpid mirror,

In which to view her own sweet face
With youthful charms and modest grace
Reflected near her.

Oh, gladsome stream and calm retreat
In Arcady when days are sweet
And halcyon ever!
May thee no tourists invade
Intrusive on thy peaceful shade
Nor thee discover!

CAMPING.

We pitched our camp beside a stream,
That rushed a mountain valley down
And leaped its barriers between
The precipices' frown.

And shadowy forms were seen to glide,
Swift darting through pellucid deeps;
The sunlight flashing on his side,
Proved where the salmon leaps.

And Oh, the glory of the skies!
The splendor of the nascent morn;
Just as the sun began to rise
Its rosy hues were born!

And here were mountains which arose
In massive grandeur, and sublime;
Peaks crowned in everlasting snows
Like opals when they shine!

Whilst wide above some snowy dome,
The deepest sapphire sky was spread,—
The infinite expanse alone
Pierced by the mountain's head!

And night's Enchantress throned afar
Above the Earth, which slept serene,
Beneath the lucent even star,
Transformed it to a dream!

Whilst perfumes scented all the air,
Commingling with the odorous gum,
Of pines and balsams and the fir
A scraggy scaur had won.

And here would we content to dwell
Have lingered out reposeful days—
But voices on the landscape fell,
And whispered 'It decays!'

WANDERLUST.

From forests and streams with their cataracts hoary
Spring bursting anew, restores them to glory—
Then seizes the heart, the vagabond spirit
At nature's suggestion, Ah, do you not hear it?
Leave your toil and your books, and your feverish worry—
The bustle of life with its hurry and scurry,
Speed to the wild-lands! Live and be jolly!
Be truant, be joyous, abjure your mad folly,
Come away, come away, and on nature ponder
Be vagrant, and happy—at liberty wander;
Multitudinous voices call from the north-land,
When the genial sun has loosened the ice-band—
Where the stream in wild fury broken asunder
Leaps the sheer precipice falling in thunder,
Or wimples and murmurs and purls in its racing—
Where the lissom birch shades it, with boughs interlacing,
O, happy it is by a stream's gentle wending
With checkers of light and shadows soft blending—
On a June-day resplendent, with fleecy clouds trailing
On heavenly blue, with the south wind prevailing—
Whilst the warm air is fragrant with balsam and pine:—
With the trout rising glorious,—the scene is divine!

THE FULNESS OF JOY.

'Tis the fulness of joy by a swift, gliding stream—
The fulness of joy in the summer;
When the flowers and leaves in the sun seem to dream,
And the rippling waves make a murmur,—

'Tis the fulness of joy for the angler who knows
Each pool in the stream, and to follow,
The river which winds and sings as it flows
And slips over stones in a shallow,

'Tis the fulness of joy, when propitious the day,
 Invites him to angle at leisure—
When the stream glances by in sylvan array
 Affording him guileless pleasure.

O, others may boast of their joy and their bliss!
 But the fisherman's joy is unselfish,
Enthusiasm most genuine is his,
 To be free and catch a big fish,

FOREST AND STREAM.

Oh, for the haunts, where nature triumphant
 Reigns in her glory afar from the noise,
And the glare of the cities, rudely defiant
 Of nature's deep peace and calm equipoise;

Where the stream rushes down and leaps in loud thunder
 The precipice high, which curbs its wild sway,
Cleaving the mad rushing billows asunder—
 The waters which foam and spout dewy spray.

Come, come to the woodlands; be free, and be joyous;
 Breathe the fulness of life in nature's delight,
Where there is freshness and naught to annoy us,
 Far from the city's distractions and blight.

Come ye who droop and are sad with life's weariness,
 Leave your toil at the desk, the bourse with its roar;
Hie to the woods and share nature's cheeriness,
 Take your rod and your gun and be young for once more,

Learn the angler's joy in nature's freedom,
 Where diaphanous pools your sport will supply,
Where the trout that are silvery, swift darting, speed from
 A noise, or a shadow, that startles them shy.

Balsamic odors will breathe on you gently
 And lull you to sleep like a slumbering child;
Nature will keep you in health and in plenty,
 Nature—so gentle, beneficent, kind.

HALCYON DAYS.

'Tis Spring and April showers are falling,
And flowers are blooming in the woodland sear,
The songster to his mate is sweetly calling
And all betokens halcyon days are near.

But spring-time deepens into sweeter summer,
When June first blooms and glorifies the land,
And bees are seeking with a gentle murmur
The blossoms sweet by gentle breezes fann'd.

The sun upon the dewy grass is gleaming
Favonian gales are blowing from South-west
And thro' the skies the fleecy clouds are streaming,—
A gentle ripple stirs the waters' breast.

And sleep is parted from the fisher's eyes
He's risen from his couch to greet the morn,—
Morn ethereal transfiguring the skies
Resplendent in the glow celestial born.

He's glad at heart, to breathe the pure sweet air,
And od'rous balsams wafted from the pine—
His pathway leads through woods of scraggy fir
Where a trout stream rushes in that glorious clime.

Wildly it leaps the precipice and falling,
A diapason makes of thund'rous sound,
Again it rushes on and loudly brawling
It dashes up and throws the foam around.

But there are pools along its gentle eddies
Where golden sands and crystal pebbles shine,
Where alders grow and a king-fisher screeches,
And perches on some isolated pine.

And here are pools, where banks are thickly wooded,
Deep pools where speckled beauties frighten'd dart,—
Affording sport, in shadowy pools secluded,
Worthy to prove the skilful angler's art.

Sometimes a qualm the gentle angler seizing
Could make him wish his prize had broke away;
When panting on the sward this beauty pleasing
Is landed from the long and dubious fray.

His silvery flanks are dotted with vermillion—
His depth of shoulder proves him strength endow'd.
Superb is he,—a king among a million
He roamed the deeps in isolation proud.

DID HORACE EVER GO FISHING.

I ASK if Horace ever went
(Or if his mind was that way bent)
A-fishing near sweet Tibur,
Or if his rustic Chloe shy
Posed on a fence as he passed by.
So that he might describe her?

Or if he ever heaved a sigh
When a fine day in spring went by—
An ideal day for fishing.
When sterner avocations bound
Him to his uncongenial round,
When it was idle wishing

For the bright brook with silver sheen,
Its banks of Asphodel between
That flowed with soft caresses,
Where Lalage in youthful charms,
With finely rounded, ivory arms,
Was gathering watercresses.

O Horace, then you missed it fine;
You never tasted joys divine,
Superior to your Masic,
When genial spring with vernal ray,
Tempts truants from their tasks away,
To taste of joys ecstatic.

With gentle art to cast the fly
Upon some eddying water by,
And, splash, the trout is leaping,
When struck, to feel a joyous thrill,
And hear the reel go whirring shrill,
As through the wave he's sweeping.

With patient skill to play him out,
And land at length a salmon trout,
Resplendent in his glory,
Then 'midst your sympathetic friends,
As each his ear attentive bends,
To tell your fishing story.

PLOVERS.

As morn upon the mellow glebe
Was spangled with the dew,
Each drop was like an amber bead
The sun was shining through.

To shaggy bushes rain-drops clung—
And in the sun just risen
Each crystal globule shining hung
To cobwebs, made a prism.

The drowsy kine recumbent lay
All in a grassy hollow,
And when their leader took the way
The rest were sure to follow.

'Twas then a plaintive whistle heard
Announc'd a sudden joy,
For lo, a flock of plovers stirred
The pulses of a boy!

And as they swept a neighboring hill
Wild whistling into sight,!—
His very heart would feel a thrill
Of exquisite delight.

But soon they fled on speedy wings
Swift flashing in the sun;
And as they wheeled and circled by,
His wish was for a gun.

THE DEATH OF SUMMER.

A Dirge.

'Tis the fall of the leaf that is sear
And the moon full and yellow
Rises through mists to transfigure
The night with light that is mellow—

By the stream the rushes that wither,—
In the winds that are sighing
Rustle together and quiver—
Mournful that summer is dying.

The plovers skim low o'er the fallow,
And the swallows are flocking together,—
The sough of the wind sounds hollow,
Soon will come wintry weather.

There falls on the landscape a pallor—
Unruffl'd the water looks languid,
With every gust the leaves fall more;
Whilst the poplars are shiv'ring and pallid.

In the sky the clouds are lowering—
Heavy with moisture congealing,
For shelter the sheep are cowering,
Seeking the warmth of their shieling.

Sad, sad is the landscape and lonely
Of its glory the garden's bereft,
The flowers are dead, whilst only
A casual blossom is left.

The beautiful summer is dying
In the pines the murmuring zephyr
For her fading glory is sighing
Lamenting it in a whisper.

A FLOWER OF THE WILD.

By river and lake, through forest wide spreading,
Untouched, undefaced by a civilized hand,—
Gladyn marched slowly, his devious way threading,—
Indefatigable leading his pioneer band,
On many a lake all noiselessly gliding,
His birchen canoe its shadow doth cast
On pools deep and clear where the muskellunge hiding,
Shuns its approach until danger is past.
Alone in the wilderness silence oppressive
He saw not the pride of the future so fair,
Only he thought of foemen aggressive—
The redman in ambush, to spring from his lair.
Ne'erless there was beauty from nature surrounding,
From virginal forest, from river and stream,
Where the cascade leaped sheer, tumultuous sounding,
And the lake repos'd placid in morning's glad beam.
Thro' unbrageous spaces the moon with her glimmer
Illusively silvers the midsummer's night

And the ripples that lap the sands as they shimmer,
Glint 'neath the sheen of the stars shining bright.

At morn when its incense the balsam exhaling,
Laded the airs from heaven new-born,
In solitudes vast, on venison regaling
High were their spirits to laugh toil to scorn.
And then at the end of their day's weary marching,
Pitched was their camp with the fire's red glow,
And the tea-kettle sang and 'neath the trees arching
The background appeared in Chiarusuro—
Sent to that land by his King, on a mission,
The fort at Detroit—his objective was near,
When there entered his tent, like a dark apparition
The Chief of the Ott'was when nightfall was near.
Majestic in stature he frown'd upon Gladyn
With eyes like the levin flashing swift fire—
Like a bronze statue he stood—stern, defiant,
Then spake he of vengeance, retributive dire.

And thou invadest these our regions, Pontiac despisest thou?
All thy race accurst shall perish, by this hand uplifted now—
Ye have wronged the Indian races, ye have robbed us of our
lands,
Called us dogs and spurned petitions offered by unwilling
hands.
All your friendship is deceitful, false your peace, and tongue
a lie,
Ye but push us further Westward, we must either fight or die,
The Indian and his pale-face brother have a treaty there is
peace,
Says the pale-face smiling blandly, let mutual suspicion cease.
So the redman and his brother sit and smoke the calumet
But palefaces pushing steady, crowd us off our boundaries
set,—
This I swear that 'ere another moon is born in yon dark sky
War shall burst upon the Yankee, thou and all thy braves
shall die.
Dire the fate that shall befall you all of you who hate our
race!
What shall guard thee from destruction, what shall save thee
from disgrace?
Thus he spake, this Indian Sachem with indignation fiercely
high,
Voluble with gestures spake he, like some ominous portent
nigh.

Where Lake St. Clair links Huron's wave
To Erie's there is seen the brave
Old flag of England, flying o'er
A fort, which serves the West as door.
A frontier post it is, and crude
With bastions built of timbers rude,—
Stretching leagues on leagues away
Primeval forests hold their sway;
Sweep from the hills and clothe the shore
From Erie to Niagara's roar,
When brilliant summer reigns supreme,
This forest is a sea of green.
Where the fierce Indian has his home,
Wild as the deer, as free to roam,
But now the hardy pioneer
With axe in hand is drawing near.
Before his strokes, it bows its pride
And cities rise where forests died.
All unaware of the unrest
Which agitates the savage breast,

The English lived in vain repose
Surrounded by their treach'rous foes,
Gladyn was Captain of the few
Tried British soldiers brave and true.
'Twas England's fault and error grave—
Displaying weakness only gave
To treacherous and bitter foes
A chance to strike when it arose.
In a fort environed by
Primeval forests and the sky
The Captain and his officers
Had little pleasure 'midst their cares.
Routine oppressed their spirits sore,
Encamp'd upon the further shore
The Huron Chieftain and his band
Were in possession of the land.
These Stoics of the wilderness
Amused them by their speech and dress,—
The Ottawas and Hurons were
The nations twain that far and near
Within Canadian borders found
Made that vast land their hunting ground,
Allies they were and true, of France,
From where Superior's vast expanse

Of waters, makes an inland sea,
They roved their forests wild and free,
After the Plain's decisive day
Had given England, France's sway
O'er Canada, and all the West,—
To straight submit at her behest
She called the tribes of hostile mind,
Submission and their arms resign'd
Were the just terms, but still delay'd
Enforcement, as she were afraid
To press her politic demands—
Amenable to her commands
To make the tribes, and draw the sting,
To one fond hope the Indians cling—
That France whom they loved to obey
Might still assert her ancient sway.
This was the expectation rife
And but delay'd the coming strife
Between the English and the foe
Who knew to deal a sudden blow.
Meanwhile the posts the French had set
Where lakes expanded, rivers met—
The English had possessed, the same
Whom traders followed for their gain.

Along the frontiers stretching far
Small posts detached many are
At intervals of hundred miles,
Menaced by foes with many wiles.
Weakly garrisoned and hence
An isolated, poor defence
They could but offer, when the war
Broke out and ravaged near and far.
The Indians claimed the land was theirs,—
Of all the West they were the heirs,
The forests and the lakes, their home
Embracing an extensive zone.
Resentful of intrusive sway
The Indians swore not to obey
The English rule,—to strike a blow
For freedom at their hateful foe,
Of this conspiracy the soul
Was Pontiac, to reach the goal
Of his ambition, he delay'd
To strike, until he had array'd

The tribes in arms confederate,
They had one common bond,—a hate
Mutual for their common foe—
One single aim—to overthrow
The English power, and to wrest
From England's grasp the wide, wide West.
This Chief perceived with great dismay
The Indian nations melt away
Before the vices, hurtful more
Than internecine strife, than war,
Famine, pestilence which came
In the detested whiteman's train.
So he dissembled and concealed
His feelings hostile, nor reveal'd
His hate until prepar'd
To strike the tardy blow, deferr'd.

But in that far wilderness begirt by gloom only,
There was a flower which bloomed fair and lonely;
Wild was this blossom which grew in seclusion
Shy in its sweetness, resenting intrusion.
Fresh as the wild rose in morning dewy
Inviting the bee to gather its honey.
Such was this maiden, with nature for teacher,
Most graceful in form and chiseled each feature.
As willow that drops o'er the brook was she lissom
Gladyn had seen none equal to this one,
Was she a maid or nymph or a vision
To vanish ere he could form a decision?
Whence came she! her origin hid in obscurity
None could discover—it waited futurity.
In the chase her foot was as swift as the doe is
To its quarry unerring her arrow would swift whizz.
None could paddle more graceful the gliding canoe,
None straighter could steer the swift rapids through;
When she roam'd thro' the forests or fish'd in the
river
She seem'd a Diana with bow and with quiver.
Her track on the wave she left behind gleaming
Her tresses unkempt in the wind flew out streaming,
O, happy it was with Gladyn in summer
When flowed the stream gently and with a low
murmur,

When lifted from care and free from his duties,
He angled for trout and caught speckled beauties.

When glorious June was breathing her zephyrs
Which laden with odours blew in soft whispers.
Through maples, and oaks, the bass-wood and
butter,
The willows and balsams, and aspens which flutter-
'Mongst cedars and firs and hemlocks fine silken
With soft fleecy clouds floating high in the welkin.
Happy it was with this maiden canoeing
Halycon days were these in their wooing.

Where the stream softly glides in musical ripples,
And the heart Ah! the heart accords with the scene,
With the South's balmy breezes perfumed with rose
petals,—

It all seems a blissful, elysian dream.
Where quietude reigns and peace from high heaven,
When nature is glad, responsive serene,
'Tis then, O, 'tis then that happiness given
Floats in a canoe with love down the stream.
'Twas then that this maiden was happy with Gladyn
When duty relaxing gave him surcease
To bid care be gone and never to sadden
The swift, happy hours too brief for to please.

'Twas wintry night, and on the snow
The campfire shed a ruddy glow,
Gladyn all day the hunt had plied,
And Madocwando was his guide.
But at the setting of the sun
No game had fallen to his gun.
And as the twilight 'gan to grow
To darkness, and the winds to blow
Through leafless trees with moaning plaint,
They pitch their camp with hunger faint,
The fir tree's fine and silken bough
Afforded couch and ease enow,
Whilst venison steak provided cheer
To men relieved from hunter's gear.
And so refreshed, from hunger freed,
Succeeded smoking of the weed.
O social pipe, the bond and tie
Of fellowship, who could deny
Thy soothing influence, so dear
To a poor wight harassed with care!
'Twas then as night was growing late,
And asked some exploit to relate,

As thro' the forest swept the blast
The Indian Chieftain sought the past.
First, slow of utterance, he told
How many moons had grown old,
How many frosts had froze anew,
The rivers where the wild fowl flew.
How many snows had covered o'er
With a white blanket Huron's shore,

Since he a daring warrior led
His braves where trackless forests spread,
Suprised and many a foeman slew,
And with success the bolder grew,
With gestures, he assayed to tell
Each feat of arms as it befell,
With charcoal sketched the rude outline—
The march, the ambuscade, the time
When sleep had sealed unwatchful eyes,—
They crept unnoticed to surprise,
To spring like wolves upon their prey
'Ere broke the winter's tardy day,
With tomahawk and scalping knife
They slaughter'd husband and his wife,
Nor children with their pleading eyes
Prevailed for mercy with their cries.
Nor did their blood suffice to sate
Our thirsty hearts infuriate.
Besides the French to encite our rage
And make us reckless to engage
The foe had given our braves the charm
That warms the heart and nerves the arm.
Numerous scalps our braves had ta'en
When lying stark amidst the slain
I saw a paleface woman fair
With ornaments that bound her hair
With brooch of gold, and locket set
With shining stones, which glittering met
My gaze, these snatched I, when behold
Revealed from 'neath a blanket fold

A babe upon her breast asleep!
That I awoke once more to weep,
I raised my hatchet for the stroke,
I would not spare, when sudden spoke
A voice, close to my ear, which said
"Number the child not with the dead",

And Madocwando listened well,
But whence the voice he could not tell.
My arm uplifted stayed I then
'Twas the great Spirit's medicine
Working in my heart, and straight
I felt toward the babe no hate.
I took the child up from the ground
And wrapped my blanket it around
And placing it in safety where
It might await my future care
I left it for the battle's reek—
The fierce assault—revenge to seek,
The tide of conflict ebbed away,
Because none more was left to slay,
Alone, of all that town remain'd
Ruins charred, all blood bestained,
While one weak babe, alone, alive,
Was all of living to survive.
Adopting in my tribe the babe,
I bore it homeward, from the raid
Entrusting it to one whose care
Was jealous of the infant fair,
And hearing nothing but our speech
With nature always apt to teach,

She prattled Indian and well
She learned our names of things to tell,
This is the maiden whom you find
Like some strange bird amidst my kind,
And she is my adopted child
Rejoicing in our freedom wild,
And she to me is just as sweet
As flowers that spring beneath my feet,
And as a little bird that sings
(But if molested spreads its wings)
And to its covert swiftly flies
Or mounting upward, seeks the skies,
So is her voice as sweet to hear
So is she shy with stranger near,

The council is gathered, the Sachem devining, his medicine
mixes whilst muttering low
His dark incantations, taught by the spirit that dwells all
unseen in the great Manitou.
Whilst the mystic dance circles the council assembled, in
contortions grotesque, rude mimicry—

War's pantomime—the ambush—surprise, the rush to the
onset to do or to die,
The clashing of weapons—the shout of the victors,—the
scalping of foes,—and the trophies of war.
It fires the blood, inciting to courage,— the fast rising pas-
sions of each warrior—
Whilst the stoical elders view with approval, smoking the
calumet, dance of the braves,
That writhes like a serpent, in slow undulations, and twists
itself through the intricate maze,
Next, Pontiac, Chief of the Ott'was, arises, his now allied
forces friendly to greet,
Whilst mute expectation, pervading the council hushes the
tumult to silence and deep.

PONTIAC'S SPEECH.

Hurons, Ottawas, Algonquins, swift of foot and strong of arm !
To track the moose through miles of forest, and face the foe
at war's alarm,—
We are gathered here in council, from lakes and regions
stretching wide,
Where the waves come rushing landward, where the streams
in summer glide.
Many snows have come and melted, many moons have
crowned the night,
Whilst the generations dying, have found the hunting
ground's delight.
Since our tribes dwelt in these regions, hunted, fished and
trapped the bear,
Built their wigwams in the forests, where the grey wolf hath
his lair,
The great Spirit loves his children, in summer when the south
wind blows,
Gives them food in winter, when the land is white with
snows,
It is in the whirlpool's cauldron, where the billows swirl with
froth,
Leap and sink, and bubble frightful,—the Manitou prepares
his broth.
Thus his children happy wandered, hunting where it liked
them best,
Until from far the Pale Face came, our lands from us to wrest.
He has brought his mighty thunder, his canoes with spreading
wings,
White like mist, which, in the morning, to the mountains
softly clings.

First the Redman loved the Pale Face, smoked with him the pipe of peace,—
But the Manitou in anger, told his children that must cease.
For the Pale Face growing stronger, would seize their happy hunting grounds,
To encompass their destruction, close them in, in narrow bounds,
They would take from them the prairies, where they chased the buffalo,—
The waters where they fished,—the forest-meadows where the maize doth grow.
From the Hurons, from his children, from Algonquins who are free
To roam the forests when it pleases, when snow has bent the sapling tree,
To lie in wait upon the pampas, for the keen -eyed Wapiti,—
To build their wigwams in the hollows by the silver birchen-tree.
Where the forests' deep recesses from the north wind, shelter gave,
When the frosty breath of winter froze the ground and stilled the wave,
Now the Ottawas and Hurons die before the white man's breath,—
He takes from us our hunting pastures, and he gives instead but death,
Our nations slowly disappearing—melting fast, are vanishing,
Like the snows before the south wind, when it blows in budding spring
Without permission he encroaches, builds his forts,—he means to stay
Upon our lands and drive us homeless from our heritage away.
Shall we be friends with him brothers? Shall we pass the calumet
In friendship with insidious foes who for our destruction set
Snares of death and fire water—would give us trinkets when we cry
Like children?—are we women? Are we afraid to fight and die?
Have we forgot the arts of warfare—the traditions of our race?
Must we like abject slaves submit, and must we crouch before his face?
We are many if united, we are strong—the pale face few—

Let us then unite as one, all our tribes, then let us do
Valiantly, and the red hatchet bury ne'er 'gainst hated foes,
Whilst one of them remains amongst us—let us strike a sud-
den blow

Against the pale face—to destroy him, then his cries shall be
our sport,

When led captive to the shambles—Nor shall be his torture
short!

In revenge for wrongs unnumbered,—in our straits for help
denied,—

For rapacious greed and pit'less, for derisive scorn and pride,
For their lust towards our women, for their cheating, kicks
and lies,—

Let us swear it, Braves and Warriors! let us swear the Pale
face dies.

War! War!! War!!! Let us fight for native land, fight for
our inheritance,

From our hunting grounds and forests let us drive the in-
truder hence!"

He finished, and approval the council lodge went round,
Whilst flourishing their tomahawks the braves leap from the
ground.

With yells anticipatory of scalping of their foes,—

Revenge—the lurking ambuscade,—trophies, scalps and
blows.

Pontiac of Eagle eye, of measured gait and visage stern,
Stoical of mood, and proud, with stately mein and taciturn,—
Jealous of his native land, its mountains, lakes and wilder-
nesses,

Comes to this maiden, sueing comes,—with flashing eye his
love confesses,

Trembling like the leaf when shaken by the wind which
shakes the bough,

The maiden hears him love confessing,—from his lips words
burning flow,

And his impetuous passion rushes from his soul in fervent
heat,

In words and vows and protestations,—he can never brook
defeat.

But this maiden answers coldly,—does not love him, never
will,—

She dislikes the Indian Sachem and her heart to him is chill.
Cradled in the forest wildness, there is pulsing in her veins,
Other blood than Indian—lineage which his very soul dis-
dains.

She knows it not and all unconscious, she reveals it in her
mein,—
That which Pontiac observing, with his eyes so sharp and
keen,—
Stings him to the quick, enrages that proud heart so passion-
ate,—
And thus he spake with hand uplifted, lowering like some
awful fate,
“And thou lovest him, my foeman, the Indian chief dost
thou deride?
Thou shalt never meet him more, he shall perish in his pride!
I would take thee to my wigwam, I would take thee to my
heart,
I would shield thee from all sorrows, I would guard thee from
all smart,
But my love thou spurnest from thee,—thou refusest my
address,
Thou alone, begirt by dangers in this gloomy wilderness,
Wilt thou call on me for mercy in the day of vengeance sore?
Thinkest thou can be forgiven when thy Pale face is no more!
And thou thoughtest to beguile me,—my conspiracy betray—
To the Paleface, to entrap me in the snares that he would lay,
He would use thee for his purpose, recreant to his plighted
troth,
By this hatchet now uplifted I would smite thee in my wrath,
To save thee from a fate most frightful—foes who hate a
traitress found,
Dog thy footsteps, lurk and cower in their sombre shades
around,—
But when he looked upon the maiden, frightened at his aw-
ful ire,
Love returned and calmed his anger, soothed his savage
heart’s desire,
For the death of those he hated, for revenge upon his foes,—
And like a fate, forboding dire, he from her presence silent
goes.
Tidings! Tidings!! The messenger panting
Gasps as he reaches the fort on the hill,
“War has outburst. The redmen are rising!
They are raging like fiends to burn and to kill.”
Along the far border, the bale fire glowing,
Announces the ruin of brave pioneers,
The stream of destruction—of death ever flowing—
Hastens to swallow the labor of years.

At night the red glare of the homes which are burning,
The horizon imbues with a deep ruddy glow
Prayers and entreaties from women are spurning,
The Savages fierce, as they deal the death blow.

Speed the news! Speed the news! By couriers running
To the East, to the West, the North and the South!
Haste! Haste!! For your lives!!! The Indians are
coming—
To leave her doomed cot, the housewife is loath.

One look of regretful longing suffices
As fleeing they turn for a moment to view—
The homes which they made,—sad is the crisis,
Of life or of death, they now must pursue
Speed the News! Speed the news!! O'er lake and o'er
mountain,
Through forest and vale—the lone wilderness,
Arise brother men! Cost be not counting!
You will not refuse succor to those in distress.

Speed the news! Speed the news!! That the ocean
may bear it
By the ship's spreading wings to Albion's isle,
Lulled to false peace—that Britain may hear it
And crushing her foes, bid peace again smile.

The fierce dogs of war let loose from their leashes,
Have scented the blood of the furious fray,
From her lone eyrie, the eagle with screeches
Has poised on her pinions to strike at her prey.

'Twas silent all, for night intense
Had settled on the vast expanse
Of forest, lake, and river, where
The savage Indian had his lair.—

Alone was Gladyn and distraught,
Oppressed with anxious care and thought.
He knew not when might fall the blow,
Impending, from his savage foe.

Thus musing sat he, whilst the glow,
From dying embers flickered low,
Whilst pussy purred for a caress
And rubbed her fur against his dress.

He fell asleep when vivid dreams
Transported him to distant scenes,
When suddenly in wild surprise
A vision stood before his eyes—

He knew the form which seemed to grow
More visible from out the glow
Which flickered fitfully, and spent
Its last ray on the visitant.

Almost invisible she
At first a phantom seemed to be,
But soon a once familiar form,
Upon him grew, sweet but forlorn.

He knew the lineaments,—the face,
(He waited silent for a space)
The fire died upon the hearth,
Whilst whin'd the hound—his faithful serf.

At length with measured speech and slow,
The maiden spoke in accents low,
He held his breath, it seemed so near,
Her speech so musical and clear.

And yet afar she seemed to be
Far, far, in distance seemingly,
Was it a dream or vision bright,
Which possessed his mind that night?

Pale, pale and shadowy her face—
Ne'erless, the anguish he could trace
Of pain and sorrow—lineament,
Familiar, yet so strange and faint.

“Beware, beware, your subtle foe
Contemplates a sudden blow,
Now is beset your lonely post
By a fierce, infuriate host”!

“Ere day anew dawns in the skies
‘Ere slumber hath forsook your eyes,
With sudden spring it is his will
To leap upon your fort and kill—

"I could not rest till from the grave
 'Twas given me to warn and save,
My peace is that, my joy shall be
 When thou has won the victory."

Her accents seemed to die away,
 In distance, to his strange dismay,
Whilst in her stead fierce faces bent,
 Upon him, murderous, intent.

Wild whooping seemed to fill the air
 With cries and agonized despair,—
Gladyn, aroused, sprang to his feet,—
 The night was silent and asleep.

No sound broke on the solitude,—
 On stream, or lake, or mournful wood.
Almost oppressive the repose,—
 When suddenly a cry arose.

That cry, significant to him,
 Meant a surprise in morning dim,—
The garrison aroused from asleep
 Sprang, armed, their savage foes to meet.

The fort is ready for defence,
 And expectation is intense,
Waiting for the onset, still
 Expectant of the signal shrill,
For the assault, Oh, the suspense
 Which inactive hangs upon
The heart, 'ere action is begun!
 Nerves to utmost tension strung!
Heart beats numbered one by one!
 The soldier harder draws his breath,
He fears—but 'tis defeat, not death.
 It wants an hour 'ere rise of sun
When through the fort a movement runs.
 The soldiers tighter grasp their guns,—
For dusky forms are seen advancing,
 This one whooping, that one dancing,
Whilst like a wave, which from the sea
Rushes foaming, landward going,
 Before the hurricane loud blowing,
So the braves impetuously
 Leave the covert of the woods

(From the fort not many roods)
Their whoops shake the welkin
But in the midst of the din,
There issue from loop holes and parapets
Puffs of smoke, and hail of bullets
Sent with aim so true
That they cripple not a few:
Whilst one or two bite the dust.

Dear reader! Think of the disgust
Of these Indians surprised
By the men whom they supposed
Were somnolent to war's alarms,
Consternation undisguised
Spread throughout the whole array,
The surprise had lost its charms,
So after volleying, they
Cover seek, with hasty feet.
It had the appearance of defeat—
Their retirement showed some haste,
At any rate they had a taste
Of a surprise, and disagreeable,
And so their onset was but feeble.
Occasion makes the hero shine
And Pontiac rose to the occasion.
He rallied his redskins, in fine
By conduct which was best pursuasion
Braver was he in the fight
Than any chief, or Indian wight,
Who followed him in admiration,
And learned of him as soldier might
Apt leadership by imitation.
Too skilful to expose his men
To fire which was fatal to them
He resolved by circumvention
To take the fort, and by prevention
Of supplies from entering in
To subdue them by slow famine
And not alone by war's contention.

They rained their balls from every quarter
Whilst keeping under cover quite.
They 'scaped the shells of gun and mortar
By such advantages they gained
Approaches to the wooden wall
On which their burning arrows fall,

By hidden marksmen rained.
So they set the fort on fire,
By day and night they never tire
Of assaulting, so persistent
Is Pontiac, to subdue
The English and their fort resistent.
Gladyn's men are brave and true,
But day by day they lesser grew
Under the attacks incessant
Of Pontiac's fierce myrmidons.
But still above the fort there flew
Old England's flag, still the guns
Thundered at the foe, and still
They fought right on with hearty will.

When you corner your Briton
He fights on, and fights on
And sells his life dearly.
He accepts his fate, merely
As a matter of duty,—
And so there is beauty
In his resolute sacrifice.
Visions of home may sometimes arise
'Midst it all—the blood and the smoke,
The explosion of shell—the swift battle stroke,
The charge of the bayonet—the deadly sap
The surprise and the sortie, defeated mayhap,
And his eyes for a moment tears may bedim.
For in the hearts of such soldiers, intrepid and grim
There's a pathos most feeling—a something within
As soft as a woman's heart, yet under fire
Heroes no braver, courage no higher.
Let Lucknow bear witness
And Rorke's Drift to this,
Ladysmith, Kimberley, Mafeking, all
Resisting, though famine and death may appal,
So here is this fort hemmed in by the foe,
Meeting them, dealing them blow upon blow,
Threatened by famine—each day a disaster—
Stronger the foe—their strength ebbing faster.
Yet they flinched not, but bravely stood to their
post,
Of every advantage making the most.
Praying the meanwhile for succor to come—
That help might arrive 'ere next morrow's sun,—

Thus they fought and endured, with patience and
will,
Defending themselves with courage and skill.

The soul of the hero was his in its grandeur,
Leading his braves, the proud warrior
Recked not of death, but scornful of danger
Led the assault sublime in his valour.

He knows in this war 'tis death to the Redman
If the fort be not taken and victory won,
The Palefaces conquered and from his lands driven
His race must decline and die one by one.

And here in the west he is shaking the power
Of Britain—with strategy subtle and fine
It looks like defeat for England each hour,
But the tide turns at last, and turns just in time.
That he was a great man goes without saying
A great savage rather, with a great soul within
An exterior rude, but a great mind displaying
And he only lost where no man could win—
For months in the fort, sore famine was pinching,
Treachery, murder, and rapine was rife,—
The garrison holding the post without flinching,
Each day growing weaker in unequal strife,
At length was descried ascending the river
A schooner provisioned—the first of the fleet
With munitions of war, sent by the giver
England; compelling a sudden retreat
The fort was relieved and Pontiac's star
Set forever behind the clouds of defeat.

